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NATIONAL TRAITS.

An Englishman, a Scotchman and an Irishman were admiring a very fine stuffed eagle in a taxidermist's window. The Scotchman shook his head and thrust his hands into his pockets, remarking: "You would cost an unco' deal to keep." The Englishman regarded the huge bird with disfavor, and said: "T'would make mighty tough eating." But the Irishman exclaimed: "Bedad, but that be a devil of burrd to fight!"

CRAPE ON DOOR.

The custom of placing crape on the door of a house where there has been a recent death had its origin in the ancient English heraldic customs and dates back to the year 1066 A. D. At that period hatchments, or armorial ensigns, were placed in front of houses when the nobility or gentry died. The hatchments were of diamond shape and contained the family arms quartered and covered with sable.

WHICH CHURCH STANDS.

The Catholic church stands for the authority of the pope, for certainty in religion, for the unity of the home and for the unity of the church.

"TIPPERARY."

An esteemed contemporary refers to "Tipperary" as an "Irish marching song." It can be called an Irish song only in the sense that the supposed singer hails from the town of Tipperary. In no other respect is it suggestive of anything Irish. None of the three men who respectively composed the words and the music and put the song on the market is of Irish birth or extraction. The emotional chap who tells us melodiously of his regret at leaving Piccadilly and Leicester Square to go to Tipperary and to that "sweetest girl" is clearly a London cockney masquerading as a homesick "Tip." Nothing like him ever existed beyond the limits of the vaudeville stage.

THE PERFECT ONE.

Father Vaughan tells a good story of a certain minister who was preaching on "Perfection." "Did you ever know anyone to be perfect?" he asked. "Did you ever read of any man or woman who was quite perfect?"

As he paused and looked around among his audience a pale-faced woman rose up and said: "Yes, from all accounts my husband's first wife was perfect."

WELL TO KNOW.

The editor was deeply engrossed in his work. When he was suddenly interrupted by the office boy, who remarked: "There's a tramp at the door, Mr. Hyde, and he says he ain't had nothin' to eat for six days."

"Fetch him in," said the editor. "If we can find out how he does it we can run the paper for another week."

HEARD IN THE GARDEN.

Why are corn and potatoes like the idols of old? Because the corn have ears and they hear not, and the potatoes have eyes and they see not.

Glorious
St. Brigid.

St. Brigid was born at Faughart, near Dundalk, County Louth, about the year of Our Lord 450, and died February 1, 525, at Kildare. Refusing many good offers of marriage she became a nun and received the veil from St. Macaille. The story of her sanctity and love for the religious life, of her founding a convent and monastery at Kildare, and of the growth of her convents all over Ireland is well known.

St. Brigid and her nuns kindled and tended the famous "fire of Kildare" which burned unceasingly for centuries, until in 1220 Henry de Londres ordered it to be extinguished lest perhaps it might become an occasion of superstition. The origin of the fire is unknown, but it undoubtedly served some deeply religious purpose. Some writers think it was an anticipation of the sanctuary lamp which now burns perpetually before the Blessed Sacrament on all the altars of the world. It was relighted by the order of the Bishop of Kildare and continued to burn until the suppression of all monasteries by Queen Elizabeth. But though the material fire was quenched forever another brighter fire has survived the persecution of the penal days, for Brigid and her daughters had kindled in the heart of Irish womanhood a burning fire of charity toward the poor, of hospitality to the stranger, of noble self-sacrifice, in behalf of the interests of God which no act of the legislature or the executive could extinguish. And greater than all she bequeathed to them a burning love for womanly virtue and for holy charity in religion which has not even been chilled by the Atlantic ocean over whose troubled bosom it had to pass to the American continent and to the ends of the earth.

Numerous were the incidents in the life of St. Brigid which brought into relief her great charity, her self-sacrifice, her love of holy chastity, and her zeal for the glory of God. The story of the blind Sister Dara was very touching. One evening at sundown Brigid began to speak to the blind sister of the love of Christ for mankind and the joys and glories of Paradise. So absorbed were both in the subject of their conversation that the sun was already rising in the east before the conversation ended. We may well suppose that it was a morning in mid-summer when the sun rises in Ireland at about 2 o'clock. When Brigid saw the beauty of the sunrise she prayed God to allow her blind sister to see it also. She signed the sightless eyes with the sign of the cross and immediately Dara saw the glories of the rising sun.

And what a sight greeted the eyes of our Saint at the first warning of approaching day! The first rays of the sun had crossed the threshold of the eastern horizon and touched the edges of the low fleecy clouds with a tint of crimson and purple and gold. His rays caught the myriad dewdrops on the grass and transformed each meadow into a mosaic of rubies, pearls and diamonds. As if to relieve the dazzling richness of the scene the eye rested here and there on clusters of pink honey stalk, daisies, buttercups and pale cowslips. These picture meadows were set in frames of hawthorn, whose dark green foliage was overlaid with a veil of snow-white blossoms of the most delicate fragrance. The lark, awakened by the coming light, as if despoiling earth, had soared above the low clouds, and was gaily singing his morning song to the few remaining stars that paled before the coming light. To the rapt listener the low notes sounded like the song of an angel, cheerily speeding on an errand of mercy to man. From a neighboring oak the cuckoo called as if he would say, "Come and see the earth with God's decoration before man disturbs it."

The sun still trembled on the verge of the horizon, the stillness was unbroken except by the song of the lark and the cuckoo's call. The scene, as far as eye could reach, was like the ante-room of heaven. It seemed as if the next moment the golden gates would swing open and heaven burst into view. Such was the scene that Sister Dara looked upon with her newly opened eyes, but turning from it, she said to St. Brigid, "Close my eyes again, dear mother, for when the world is so visible to the eyes, God is seen less clearly to the soul." Again Brigid prayed and Dara's eyes grew dark once more.—Rev. J. M. Hegarty in Irish Catholic.

DANGEROUS INDIFFERENCE.

There is no danger of religion dying out. Attend a mission in one of our churches and witness the manifestation of faith. People may talk about the decline of the church and that sort of thing, but there is no decline in religious belief, and there never will be as long as mankind remains on the face of the earth. The world is full of sorrow; from the disappointments of this world men have turned their faces hopefully toward another, and they always will; this is their only consolation. It is not so much the loss of faith in our day as a dangerous indifference, a kind of lethargy, an conservatism of compromise between the claims of the world and the lawful claims of God upon the soul.

WHERE IRELAND SCORES.

Whether Ireland is the finest country in the world for growing flax, it is, beyond dispute, the finest in the world for bleaching linen. Nowhere else can the snow-white finished fabric be turned out in rival the Irish bleaching. France, Belgium, Germany and America have all entered into competition and retired unsuccessful. The quality of the water, the climate and the inherited experience of the Irish bleachers all contribute to the result.

REAL TASTY DISH.

A few dates added to apple sauce makes a tasty dish.

IRISH HEART.

Take Innocence and Candor and a love for every right. And mix them up together with a goodly share of fight—And add a dash of Pathos and of Sympathy a share.

And equal parts of Faith in God and fervor in the Prayer. And Charity's sweet emblem might be tucked in there to show That Hope is ever resplendent in a soft, ecstatic glow.

Then label it with Courage and a sense of Wit and Fun. Nor be ashamed to claim it nor to stand by what you've done: But simply pour in Humor of the brilliant, wholesome kind. And all the loved ingredients of healthy human mind.

And set it on a pedestal of onyx grand and white. And then call all the people in to witness while you write This fond and true inscription, taken from life's every part:

"This is, dear friends, a common thing—'tis just an Irish heart."

—W. M. Fogarty.

GOD DOES NOT FORGET.

The world will strip your fallings And hide the good you do, And with its sharpest thorns The ways you walk bestrew. You'll toil for men—they'll curse you: But God does not forget.

The hours of silent grieving For some one loved and lost, The hours of self-denial, 'Twere hard to count their cost; The falling soul exulted, The sorrow heavily met—All are on earth forgotten, But God does not forget.

His eye is ever seeking The wee things done for Him; And that shall light the shadows, Where death waits, stern and grim.

So lift your burden gladly, Nor falter, fear nor fret; For heaven is in the distance, And God does not forget.

—Brian O'Higgins.

AMERICAN ACHIEVEMENTS.

Americans founded the first government under which all men were equal before the law. Since the Declaration of Independence was published to the world the democratic idea has hourly received impulse until now its march seems irresistible.

Americans were the first to demonstrate the feasibility of relying on a citizen soldiery to defend the land and its institutions against foreign or domestic attack. Americans were the first to abolish tribal distinctions and to deprive social eminence of any support save character or the consensus of those who chose to consider themselves socially elect.

It was an American who invented the steamship.

An American invented the telephone.

An American invented the electric light.

An American invented the reaper which makes it possible to feed the billion and more people on this planet.

It was an American, too, who invented the sewing machine. Americans also were the conquerors of pain when they discovered how, by means of sulphuric ether, the tenderest human nerves could be made insensible to the surgeon's steel.

PRETTY IRISH LEGEND.

An old Irish legend goes to tell that when the mother dies she looks after the family until all her own are gathered by her side. In this connection a very beautiful custom prevailed of putting a lighted candle near the window on the nights peculiarly appropriate to the mother, such as her marriage anniversary, the birthdays of the children, and such. On these occasions the mother was expected to look in on the family.

IRELAND'S ANCIENT NAMES.

In ancient times Ireland was known by the various names of Juverna, Juverna, Hibernia, Ogygia, Inisfail, Isle of Beauty and Scotia Major. Even now it is sometimes called Erin, but its designation by this title is chiefly confined to poets. The name Erin comes from "Eire," wife of the King who ruled Ireland when the conquering Milesians arrived.

BASILICA VATICANA.

St. Peter's at Rome is a Basilica—the Basilica Vaticana—but it never was, and is not now, a cathedral. We mean by a cathedral the church where a bishop has his official seat. In Rome it is the Lateran church dedicated to Christ the Saviour, and in the second place to St. John Baptist, which holds this dignity. Hence, the inscription which all who go there may read: "Mother and Mistress of All Churches." In the Lateran, not in St. Peter's, the Roman Pontiff takes possession of his See, and in it the Cardinal Vicar holds ordinations on Ember days.

HOME FOR THEM.

The "Unster Volunteers" who were so active before the home rule bill passed, have not been heard of in the present war. We understand that a few of them have enlisted for service in Egypt—they insisted that they should not be sent to France—but the great majority still constitute a "home guard." The volunteers were very brave when it was merely a matter of parade. But their bravery vanished at the beginning of a real war. And they were the men who were going to fight against home rule!

Dennis' Intention.

Many years ago the Rev. Dr. Curran, pastor of the Church of the Assumption at Peekskill, N. Y., was an assistant at St. Stephen's, East Twenty-eighth street, New York City. The parish was a very large one, containing several thousand souls. In his visits to the sick Dr. Curran became acquainted with hundreds of the parishioners in their homes, as priests do everywhere in the course of their pastoral duties.

In one poor family on First avenue was old Dennis McCarthy, superannuated and feeble. He could not work, for he was long past that. The laboring man's old age, unless comforted by the support of sons and daughters able to give bread and something more, means poverty at least, if not destitution or the almshouse. But Dennis, though not well clothed, was happy. His wants were few, his married son, with whom he lived, was not rich, but not complaining at the father's enforced idleness.

One day old Dennis came to the rectory and offered Dr. Curran a dollar for his "intention," requesting the favor of a mention in the mass. The dollar was accepted, and the mass offered. A month later Dennis appeared again, making another offering of the same amount, and requesting the mass for his intention. The clergyman thought that some person was furnishing the money especially to Dennis and wondered who it was. A third month came and again old Dennis appeared and made his offering to the same priest. And the mass was offered. But the celebrant pondered. From what source was the poor old man receiving the money?

When Dennis appeared in the month following the priest felt in duty bound to question him.

"Is this your own money you are offering?" he asked.

"It is, Father," answered Dennis, "and if I'm sick don't forget to come to the house and 'tend to me.'"

"Why, of course, I'll do that," said the priest; "but you are a poor man. I can not take your money. I'll say the mass for you regularly, just the same, but keep your money, my good man; you need it."

"Father," the old man whispered, his eyes filling with tears, "sure it's not angry with me you are, is it?"

"No, not at all," said the good priest, hastily and kindly, "not at all; why do you ask that?"

"Well," cried the old man, "why don't you take my money?"

The priest was puzzled. "My good man," said he, "I'll offer the mass for you just the same as if you had made an offering. But I think you're too poor to be making any offering. You ought to keep the money for yourself."

The old man looked so distressed that the priest hastened to say, softly and gently: "Where do you get the money? You have no income, have you?"

"Father," said old Dennis, "the boy gives me a few pennies now and again for tobacco. And I puts away a few at a time, and don't spend them all. And when I have the dollar, sure I want the mass said for my intention."

The good priest, looked at old Dennis. There was the spirit of the faith, the spirit of sacrifice, the great thing in a gift for God. Old Dennis had preached the sermon. Old Dennis had lived it.

BUILDING MISSION CHURCHES.

Building memorial churches for poor, decadent districts. Instead of erecting costly monuments over the dead departed is the method advocated by the Catholic Church Extension Society for truly honoring the dead. These little churches seldom cost more than \$1,500. The society has a long list of places that are urgently writing in for chapels, and God, who has many loving friends numbered among the benefactors of the society, sometimes inspires some good soul to come to the rescue and donate the sum of \$500. Five hundred dollars does not build the entire chapel. The people of the congregation to be benefited by this gift generally raise the balance, but \$500 is a sum that goes a long way toward erecting one of these temples for a congregation that is struggling ever, and poor always. Any gifts sent in to the Catholic Church Extension Society, whose offices are located in the McCormick building, Chicago, will be gladly forwarded for this most worthy work.

VATICAN.

The Vatican, in which the Conclave of Cardinals assembles, though commonly spoken of as a palace, is rather a series of palaces. It stands on one of the famous seven hills to the west of Rome and the Tiber, and north of the Janiculum. It did not even always form part of the city. The palace, as it now exists, is in three stories, contains twenty courts, 13,000 apartments, eight grand staircases, and 290 smaller ones. Unhappily there is no exterior facade. The foundation of the Vatican is lost in antiquity and bears traces of all styles of architecture, culminating in that of the Renaissance.

GOOD TO READ.

At this time, when so much prejudice and hostility is being exhibited toward the Catholic church, it is refreshing to spend a few moments at least perusing the pages of Rev. Father John Phelan's excellent work, "Appeal For Unity in the Faith." This book is one that will certainly create good and friendly feeling and promote the cause of Christian union and fraternity. Copies may be ordered from Father Phelan, Grand Junction, Iowa, or through the Rogers Book Company, this city.

BEAN MUFFINS.

One cup mashed baked beans, one egg, one cup flour, half cup Indian meal, one teaspoon baking powder, one cup milk, half cup sugar, one small spoon salt. Beat well and cook in muffin time in quick oven.

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A GLIMPSE OF HEAVEN.

A priest had preached a sermon on the joys of heaven. A wealthy member of his church met him the next day and said: "Father, you told us a great many grand and beautiful things about heaven yesterday, but you didn't tell us where it is."

"Ah," said the father, "I am glad of the opportunity of doing so this morning. I have just come from the hilltop yonder. In that cottage there is a poor member of our church. She is sick in bed with fever. Her two little children are sick in the other bed, and she has not got a bit of coal or a stick of wood or flour or sugar or any bread. Now if you will go downtown and buy \$10 worth of things—rice, provisions, fuel, etc.—and send them to her and then go and say, 'My friend, I have brought you these provisions in the name of God,' you will see a glimpse of heaven before you leave that little dwelling."

KING'S VISIT.

It has been definitely decided that King George is to visit Ireland this year at a date to be fixed later. It will be probably either in May or June.

STORY SCOTT LIKED.

Walter Scott liked to tell the story of his meeting an Irish beggar in the street who importuned him for a sixpence.

Not having one, Scott gave him a shilling, adding with a laugh, "Now, remember, you owe me sixpence."

"Och, sure enough," said the beggar, "and God grant you may live till I pay you!"

POTATO BISCUIT.

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Home is where happiness, health, harmony, heart's ease, holiness, heritage, heaven dwell.

Home is where the wife is neat and clean, and the husband sober and industrious, and the children respectful.

Home is a comfortable and necessary retreat and shelter for us in adversity, and if we do not plant it while young it will give us no shade when we grow old.

LIGHT OF HIS EYES.

A clergyman lost his wife, and on her tombstone had inscribed, "The light of my eyes is gone out." A few years flew by, and the fate of the departed's husband took unto himself another wife. Strolling past the wife's grave one day, the attention of a high dignitary of the church, for his epigrammatic wit, was attracted to it, and he was asked what he had inscribed on the stone under the circumstances? He thought came the reply, "The light of my eyes has gone out, and I struck another match."